The Official Newsletter of the United Fanzine Organization

TETRAGRAMMATON FRAGMENTS

February 2018

#248

The UFO Membership

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TETRAGRAMMATON FRAGMENTS #248
FIRST PRINTING: February 2018. This edition is a special PDF version. printed by Rob Imes (contact info above). **PRICE**: $3.00 postpaid in the USA.
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CHAIRMAN CHATTER

Welcome to the new issue of *T-Frags*, the UFO Newsletter. The front cover this time is by our newest member **Rob Cooley**. Thanks, Rob!

The deadline for this issue had been scheduled for Dec. 10th, 2017. Only 3 members had submitted columns by that date and it was agreed on the *UFO Members Only* Facebook page that the deadline should be pushed back to January 10, 2018. More members then had time to contribute, but before I knew it February had arrived and I hadn't yet printed up this issue. So, here we are -- I'm typing this page on Feb. 7 and will be printing up the issue either later today or tomorrow. To be fair, I have revised everyone's annual paid dues dates by TWO months. That way you aren't paying for an issue that you didn't receive. The revised due dates are:

BRANSTETTER: paid until Aug. 2018
BULLOCK: paid until June 2018
CALLAGHAN: paid until Oct. 2018
COOLEY: paid until Dec. 2018
GAFFORD: paid until Aug. 2018
IMES: paid until March 2018
JOHNSON: paid until April 2018
KEEL: paid until August 2018
KELLY: paid until August 2018
SHIRES: paid until August 2018
SISSOM: paid until Jan. 2019

The **"must publish a zine by"** dates are:

BRANSTETTER: April 2018
BULLOCK: June 2018
CALLAGHAN: Feb. 2019
COOLEY: Sept. 2018
GAFFORD: *overdue* (July 2017)
IMES: *overdue* (October 2017)
JOHNSON: *overdue* (Dec. 2016)
KEEL: *overdue* (April 2017)
KELLY: Dec. 2018
SHIRES: Dec. 2018
SISSOM: Dec. 2018

As can be seen above, four members (including me) have yet to release a zine in the past 12 months, or longer. I have granted extensions for their publishing deadlines. I hope to get ***Ditkomania* #96** published in the next month or two, depending on my finances.

LOST & GAINED: **Rick Brooks** sent me a letter dated Dec. 28, 2017 letting me know that he was leaving the UFO effective immediately. I'm sad to see him go and wish him all the best.

The **deadline for next issue** (#249) will be **April 10, 2018**. The members who must write a column for TF #249 are: **Jason Bullock** and **Rob Cooley**.

The following non-members are paid **subscribers** to *T-Frags*. (The final issue of their sub is in parentheses next to their name.) Subscriptions are $15.00 for 6 issues in the USA.

LARRY BLAKE (#251)
SCOTT DAVIS (#252)

That's it for now. See you next time!
-- Rob Imes, UFO CHAIRMAN

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The UFO Constitution

Article One: Becoming a Member

To become a member of the **United Fanzine Organization** co-op, one must inform the Chairman of one's **application** and send a copy of his/her comic or zine to all members listed on the UFO roster. The membership will then **vote** on acceptance. (If the applicant's zine or comic is available to view online, the applicant may email the members a link to the pages for evaluation in lieu of mailing a printed copy; however, applicants should send a printed copy to members who are not regularly online or who specifically request the applicant to mail them a printed copy.) If a majority of the membership votes "yes" on the applicant's admission, he/she becomes a member. Applicants who receive a majority of "no" votes may apply again for membership at a later date.

Article Two: Membership Requirements

(a) All members are required to **publish a minimum of 20 pages** of new material (comic or text) per year. Web zines with equivalent material will count toward membership requirements. There is no maximum limit to the number of titles one may publish as memberzines.

(b) Each member is required to **mail a free copy of each memberzine**, as it is published, to all other co-op members. Publishers of webcomics should send hard copy versions of their online comics to the membership (as not all members may have internet access). Digital publishers must send an email to each member notifying them of their webzine. (Since webzines are free to all, those publishing print zines are not required to mail their zines to those publishing only on the web, but are encouraged to do so.)

(c) Each member is required to **submit a column** to at least every other issue of the UFO Newsletter (*Tetragrammaton Fragments*). The purpose of member columns is first to review the memberzines that one has received and second discuss club business (such as voting on amendments and applicants). *T-Frag* contributions are limited to a maximum of 10 pages each issue per member, unless the member receives the Chairman's consent to allow a higher page count for that particular issue of the newsletter.

(d) **Member dues are $20.00 annually**. These dues help to cover co-op promotion, and printing and mailing of the bi-monthly UFO Newsletter. If a member falls behind in his/her annual dues and/or publishing requirements, the member may ask the Chairman for a brief extension. If the member is dropped for failing to meet publishing requirements or newsletter participation, any remaining money in their account will be used toward their subscription to the newsletter.

(e) The UFO is limited to **25 members**. Others applying after the limit is reached will be placed on a waiting list and considered for membership in the order in which they applied. Waitlisters have the option of submitting a column to the UFO newsletter but they are not required to do so. It is at the discretion of each UFO member whether to send their memberzines to those on the waitlist since it is not required. UFO members are allowed to be members of other co-ops while they are in the UFO.

(f) **Honorary Members** are persons who have been voted into that position by a majority vote of the members. They may contribute to the newsletter, but have no voting power, are not required to pay the annual dues, and are not required to meet publication requirements. It is at the discretion of each member whether to send an Honorary Member a copy of their memberzine or not, as it is not required.

Article Three: Memberzine Requirements

(a) Each UFO publication must carry the **UFO symbol** on one of its four covers (exterior or interior front and back), preferably the front exterior cover. Webzines must display the symbol on their front page prominently.

(b) Each UFO memberzine (print or digital) is required to carry the **UFO Checklist**. Members may alter the wording in the Checklist as it appears in their own publications, as long as the changes are accurate and non-detrimental to those listed. (For minis or zines of 16 pages or less, an Abbreviated Checklist may be used, with simply the titles and prices of the books, and the names and addresses of the respective publishers.)

(c) The UFO does not **censor** its material, however responsibility and use of good taste and common sense in publishing are encouraged. The Chairman must publish member columns in the UFO newsletter unedited as long as they are within the page-count limit and not illegal or obscene in content.

Article Four: The UFO Chairman

(a) **Annual election**: A Chairman shall be elected in September, by a majority vote of the members, to a one-year term commencing in November. (Those running for the position of Chairman should start their campaigns no later than the July issue of the newsletter.)

(b) **Responsibilities**: An elected Chairman has the duties of editing and publishing the bi-monthly UFO newsletter, conducting the general co-op business, managing member dues accounts, or delegating these affairs. In consideration of the time and effort expended in the production of the UFO newsletter, a newly elected Chairman will be allowed two years -- dating from the publication of this first NL -- to publish an issue of his/her regular small press book, instead of the one zine a year requirement for the other members.

(c) **Emergency Chairman**: It is important that the UFO Chairman appoint an Emergency Chairman immediately upon assuming office. The Emergency Chairman shall assume the office of UFO Chairman if the elected Chairman resigns the position prior to the next election, or if the elected Chairman fails to publish the newsletter for more than 100 consecutive days.

(d) **Removal**: There is no limit to the amount of terms a Chairman may hold. The Chairman may be removed from office only by a majority vote. A Chairman who decides not to run for another term should make this known to the members prior to the publication of the July newsletter, so that other members may have time to announce their campaigns for the position.

Into The Multiverse

Ian's Column #4

Well this issue's deadline snuck up on me! I blinked, and here it is! Frankly, I've been a bit distracted lately, some of you may know I've had long-running issues with my foot and many surgeries...last year had this ankle replacement which was supposed to be a pretty drastic and final solution...and I was ok for the first 6 months once I got walking again...but then…

Long story short, my bones have been trying to grow around the implants, so now I have ridges and spurs and basically the replacement has failed. Next option is even more drastic. They are going to remove the artificial parts...then fuse what's left into one big rock of a bone.

Not to get too gross about what they are gonna do...because it's kinda a major joint...and they are removing it...it's going to require them to do these bone grafts from the leg into the foot bone, put on this halo device to basically hold my foot onto the end of my leg, until the bone grows together.

Puts me off my feet for at least 3 months...right when I was planning on re-launching my magazine and the SPA. So...I'm going to have to delay those plans till I can sit at the computer again. I'm going to set up a laptop to at least keep up with some things while this goes on...and I may still be able to do art finishes on that laptop for Timetrvlr so I don't have to break it's monthly run...but if I do...I'll probably just do catch up issues so when I am back at it, the series gets back to where it should be. I mean hey...I've gotten art drawn through #18 now, scripts through #26...and I'm gonna have a lot of time to write soon, lol.

ANYWAY! Enough about me, just wanted you all to know what was up. Now on with the show…

T-FRAGS #247

Wonderful read, as always, providing that "warm fuzzy" wow, I'm part of this great this feeling. It kills me that there are only 25 copies getting printed each issue and two subscribers. We all really need to look at what we, personally can be doing to make the UFO better known and get more people into what the group's all about. When this issue hits...the least all of us can do is blast out to our social media accounts that it's been released, and if our fans would like to get a copy tell them how...let's force T-Frags #248 into a second printing, and see if we can build some excitement for that #250 issue just around the corner!

Burlap #2

I really want to like this, and there are a few aspects of the story I do like. However, this is a seriously flawed book that left me wanting to fill huge plot holes, and well, teach some things about production. I'll close with the stuff I liked, and start with the beat-down. First of all: If the only way people can contact you is through the UFO checklist, then you are not doing your job as the publisher of the book. As this issue stands, it LOOKS like the UFO is the publisher of it. You have zero space devoted to the who you are, how to contact you, copyright info, that you absolutely should be including in everything you publish. If you get nothing else from my review here, get that. Your publication is a temple...if you don't make it clear that

you are the king who built it, some other king will get credit in history. Second: I can see un-erased pencil art under the inked art, all through the book. It clouds your lettering. I am not privy to your full process of prepping pages for print...but if you are not able to get all the pencil marks off the paper, and it shows up in scans, and I do hope you are scanning the art into computer, there are ways to fix it. I am going to be writing an extensive how-to on this, cause Rob Cooley needs the info too, and I'll use only free programs so anyone has access to being able to do it. Regardless, the pencil marks...take this instantly down to amateur hour...and we need to all lift each other up to bring the value of being in the UFO to full bear. Third—Story flow. This part perplexed me the most, as I don't have easy answers to fix it...I can really just point it out. Now, I'll grant that I missed the first issue...so some back story and character relationships are obviously lost on me instantly, but...I followed the story pretty well till like page 10-11...when I just wasn't sure what time frame things were happening in anymore, and the full force of not knowing what happened in #1 seems to have muddled what goes on this issue. The resolution became very hollow, lacking emotion and impact, because the issue seems to try to do too much. More exposition on the struggle back to health, and the planning of the revenge, would have helped. And I didn't get when she tossed the mask and gun, the next panel showing her in them again, that didn't come across. Now, what I do like: You stick to your guns on your presentation of views...what's right and wrong in the world, randomness of tragedy, depths of evil and lengths people will go to. Dug that. Keep at things...and might I suggest trying to narrow your pages so they will then shrink down to digest size, think about it!

The Imagination Link #51

If I don't say a lot about this publication, it's because it's that good. Seriously, there's just not much for me to do what I do best, cause when something is good I'm like, yeah, that rocks, and I'm on to the next book. Could use a cooler logo...but it fits the literary nature of the book too, so, not even sure how much that is needed. Excellent production values throughout. I'm probably not a big fan of "continued in the back of the book" prose stories...I mean, for me, I'd complete the feature, and if I didn't have enough room to start the next on the same page, I'd toss in an ad for something the creator did, and go to the next page. But none of this takes one bit away from the entertainment value of this publication, which is well worth getting, good show Alan, look forward to the next one!

And that's all I got since last issue, so I'll close out this column by thanking Gavin and Tim. Why? Well, out of the blue, Gavin mails me page one of a team-up effort for Timetrvlr and Stix and Stonz...which I then finished cause he left parts blank, scanned it, did art fixin' and colorin', and sent it back to him with a script for page two. We went back and forth till we had a seriously cool six page story which will run in Timetrvlr #12. Tim let me know he was up for a cross over as well, and so I've written and he's drawing a 2-parter (12 pages total) ((which I may draw some of if the conclusion of the story—which I haven't finished writing yet– goes that way)) with Zook and Max, which kinda puts our styles of writing and art into a blender without a lid. Tim's working on Part 1 now, I'll finish writing part 2 soon. So remember, if ANY of you want to have some time travel madness spill into your characters lives...just ask!

-Ian Shires

—SISSOMISMS!—

By Alan Sissom—JAN./FEB.. 2018—INSTALLMENT #11 *(for T-FRAGS #248)*

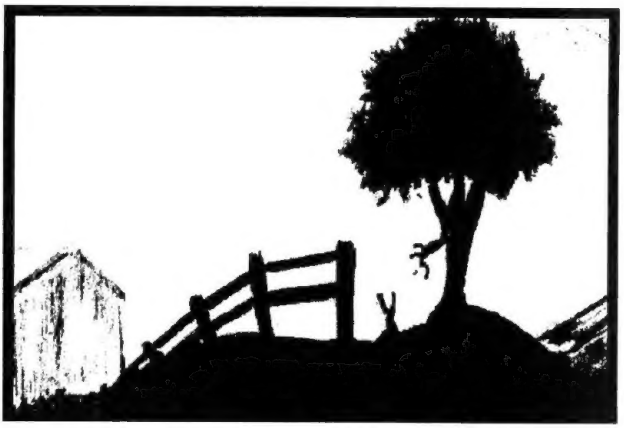
CURRENT NEWS AND SUCH:

You may notice that this issue's "SISSOMISMS" column is numbered "11" as though it has skipped an installment. The reason for this is that installment #10 was recently sent for an appearance in **COLLECTORS' CLUB NEWSLETTER** #122, by Mike Mitchell, available from COLLECTORS' CLUB NEWSLETTER, P.O. Box 842, Greenwood, IN 46142. Don't worry, you haven't otherwise missed anything. I've asked Mike there in the **CCN** if I could try writing an installment in addition to my regular column for **T-FRAGS**, and he kindly said yes. At the moment this is just an experiment, to see if it will help me get into a more regulated schedule for writing this column, since I tend to skip every-other-issue in its regular placement within **T-FRAGS**.

My latest news is probably NOT news to most of you, that I've finally been able to get another issue of my own publication **THE IMAGINATION LINK**, issue #51, finished and printed back in November. So, it would probably be a lot smarter for me to pass along my plans for the near future instead.

The problem with that is that I'm never completely sure where I'm heading with those plans until I actually get there. But I'm sure that's a common problem for all of us.

At some point, I still have plans to produce a humor publication, a continuation of my older publication titled **HMPH!** to which I've lately (on a Facebook group) added the subtitle **YOU CALL THAT HUMOR!?** I can blame the inclination in wanting to create a humor-based publication on my longtime love of **MAD MAGAZINE** and the various clone publications that followed its first appearance. I even attempted to create such an animal back in my high school daze called **BARF!** which was appropriately titled in order to be sold during the school's lunchtime—when else?—until a member of the faculty caught wind of my nefarious plan and told me that would be against school policy to sell such a thing on campus. My dreams of world domination dashed, I lost in-



terest quickly in any alternate plan.

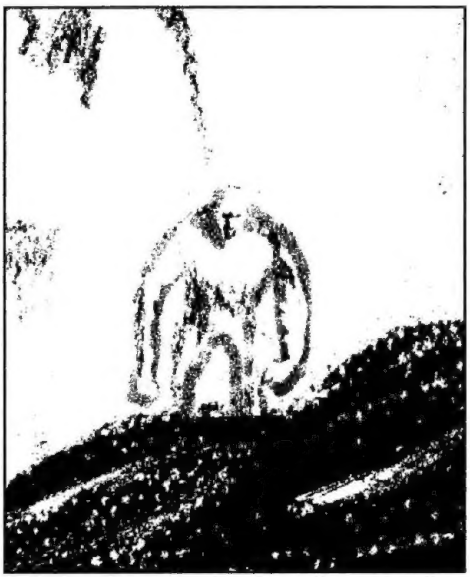
Nevertheless, I find I still have that old interest bobbing up from time to time, so ...one never knows.

As for **THE IMAGINATION LINK** itself, I'm very pleased with the current format, if not the initial reaction from its would-be readership ('cause you guys are awfully silent about it and I only get my jollies in hearing what you think about it here in **T-FRAGS** and never directly).

So, expect more of the same in future issues. The only thing I wish to change is the frequency by which it appears, but I've mentioned that before.

If you're wondering — within the latest issue — how I came to write a short story completely in first-person as a female character, there is a perfectly logical explanation. In my own mind, I was writing (at least at the beginning) a pastiche of **DARK SHADOWS**, but one set in the South and which added a few spices from Manly Wade Wellman's "Silver John" stories. (If any of you have failed to encounter Wellman's character, I highly recommend it, especially starting with ***JOHN THE BALLADEER***, which was an expansion of an earlier collection titled ***WHO FEARS THE DEVIL?***.) **DARK SHADOWS** started off many of its earlier episodes with a female character telling the audience, *"My name is Victoria Winters. I came here to Collinwood to become the new governess for the youngest Collins family member, David Collins..."* and that style of female-centric narration seemed somehow necessary to what I was doing because of that. I hope that didn't put many of you off much.

By the way, I forgot to mention within the issue that the second episode of my comics story **BROKEN LINK** was originally done back in the late 1980s to early 1990s, but was updated for its appearance in **THE IMAGINATION LINK** #51. The next episode of **BROKEN LINK** will be *completely* new, written and drawn currently, and I'm working on the material as we speak.



"Valley of the Yeti" by **ROGER KEEL** was a real surprise for me, folks! I'm very extremely grateful to Roger for the wonderful work he's been sending in for me to include. I don't know about the rest of you, but I think "Valley..." shows that he's getting better and better with each story he writes. It looks like he's planning to send me more. I sure hope so! Roger's work is a delight to receive and a pure highlight for each issue of **THE IMAGINATION LINK**, and I simply can't overstate

that no matter if I tried!

COMMENTS TO OTHER MEMBERS:

I must pause here to offer a sincere apology to **ROB IMES** in connection with his article on **DOCTOR WHO MAGAZINE** found reprinted in the current issue. I inadvertently switched the covers on **DOCTOR WHO WEEKLY** #1 (Oct. 1979) and the tenth anniversary issue from 1989, in which Rob was demonstrating the periodical reuse of material.

I also inadvertently labeled his copyright for the article as © 2014, but it should have been © 2015, when it was actually originally published in a past issue of **CCN**. I regret any confusion I might have caused by these errors.

REVIEWS OF CURRENT 'ZINES:

I must confess something here. When it comes to reviewing fellow members' titles, I have a hard time trying to find the right critical voice. On the one hand, we are not a professional bunch of creators here, and I'm not always certain that I should take the stance that we should somehow still be judged against the same yardstick as those used against a professional company. But is it then fair for me to "grade with a curve," so to speak? Review too critically and I face a reaction that can be boiled down to the other person asking, "who are you, Sissom, judging by shortcomings I've seen within your own work, that you can heavily criticize what is lacking in my work when you seem to be able to do no better?"

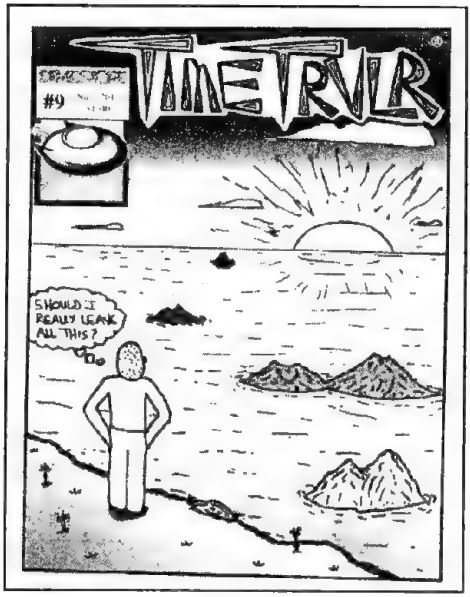
That would indeed be a good question.

So, what I've ended up doing up to this point has been to give each title the benefit of the doubt, that there is more wrong with each of them than right, and I've tried to focus on the positive of each instead, with kid gloves firmly in place. Frankly, I don't think that's fair to the creator, since I'm bypassing something that they possibly don't even notice about their own work, and therefore will never be given the choice to improve or ignore what I personally view as a negative aspect.

I think the best solution to that implied problem is to break up each review into two parts, one labeled ***What I liked about the item***, and ***What I didn't like about it***. Hoo boy! What I could tell you about what I didn't like about my own works could literally fill an entire issue of **T-FRAGS** by itself.

Anyway...

The preamble above leads me to respond to **IAN SHIRE**'s comments to my own last issue, reprinted in **TIMETRVLER** #8. Ian, it isn't that there are so many characters to keep up with in your mini-comic that I'm having trouble with, or that more will be added as the series continues, my "confusion" with keeping everyone straight has more to do with the "why" I should care what happens to these characters at all? None of them are fleshed out beyond being mere extensions of yourself. I'm seeing a very complex



story here told from the vantage-point of characters who all seem practically the same! Why is "Herman Hanks" a different character than "Sherman" or "Marvin" or any other number of simplistically drawn characters?

When I was agreeing with you that this isn't a very good "jump-in point" I was referring to that aspect specifically. It would appear that you assume that readers know exactly who these characters are, and I'm still wondering why I should care who they are.

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT TIMETRVLER:

The color added with issue #8 has really made Ian's artwork take on — literally — another dimension. I must say the simplicity of the artwork is a definite plus here, because the ongoing storyline is complex. That creates a nice balance.

The covers are really beginning to reflect this, and #9 particularly really showed off Ian's abilities well. Nice sunrise or sunset scene!

WHAT I DIDN'T LIKE ABOUT TIMETRVLR:

As stated above, I really wish Ian would take a moment to spotlight one character after another in an effort to make the characters more realistic. As I asked above, "why am I supposed to care about these characters"? If Herman Hanks had exploded, or been knifed to death, or completely ceased to exist — or whatever — my respondent feeling would have been a nonchalant "meh" and he'd be quickly forgotten. Same for any of the multitude of characters. It looks like Ian is *trying* to infuse them with character, but it seems as though he's so obsessed with the complexity of his overall story running through every issue that he's not wishing to pause and take the readers hand long enough to introduce (or re-introduce) who these characters individually are, or even why they seem to be in danger of non-existence — or worse! — every few pages.

Again, consider the introspection portrayed on the cover of issue #9. I was looking forward to knowing more about the cover character directly BECAUSE he was standing there taking a moment, poignantly wondering why he should leave such beauty. I was immediately caught up — wondering "where is he going?" and "Why does he have to leave at all?" Sure, the story *appears* to pick up that thread in the next issue, #10, but not really as directly. And the cover tease is already an issue old by then.

Still, I *like* Ian's art style. I just

hope his writing style learns to work more directly into the simplicity of that art style, and that—if so—would make this one terrific mini-comic indeed. It has a head start toward that direction, and I hope Ian learns to pace things and develop each aspect into just such a nice balance as I'm suggesting.

A STRANGE & CHAOTIC WORLD #1, by new member **ROB COOLEY** is an interesting entity, to say the least. Like Ian's work above, I do think that a few "bugs" need to be worked out, but there is strong potential here.

WHAT I LIKED ABOUT A STRANGE & CHAOTIC WORLD: The artwork is well-done and is the highlight. (However, I do want to mention I was surprised by **GAVIN CALLAGHAN**'s comment here last issue that Cooley seems to him to be "the most polished artist in the **UFO** at this time." I don't agree. I personally think that designation should go to either **DAVID BRANSTETTER** or **LARRY JOHNSON**, but I will admit Rob Cooley has the *MAKINGS* of being a polished artist, if not more.)

The snippet of story in this first issue was a good introduction, in the same way as a prologue, setting things up just prior to possibly ***beginning*** the real story with the next issue.

However,...

WHAT I DIDN'T LIKE ABOUT A STRANGE & CHAOTIC WORLD: The writing here was not as tantalizing as the stylized artwork presented itself was. I was a bit disappointed that there wasn't more of a plot presented. I will concede that that may be because this was simply an introduction to the series.

The artwork itself looked as though it were designed for a much smaller publication than a "digest" sized one here, and—in fact—Rob even refers to it as a "mini-comic" in his text notes following the story. This might explain why things seemed so cramped on each page.

And, of course, it has already been noted by many here that there was *WAY* too big of an outer margin on each page, making the artwork look too small. I'm thinking that—if Rob had kept the panels roughly the size as printed—he could have added more on each page and given us a little more storyline and perhaps could have presented us with a real cliffhanger kind of plot, building into

a real anticipation to see what might happen next.

All in all, though, I look forward to his next effort with a definite hope that Rob will fix the problem seen here by filling each page with his artwork and presenting us with storytelling handled as well as the artwork itself was. You can do it, Rob!

I'm still trying to play "catch up" with my reviews here, and I find I have way too much to say to cover every title yet again! Regardless, I want to say something about a couple of really terrific digest comics by **DAVID BRANSTETTER** before I sign off for this issue, because it's long overdue.

WEIRD COMICS vol. 47 #1 and a one-shot titled **THE WINTER OF '89** both arrived the same day last year and really caught my attention. Since WINTER OF '89 was not an official publication promoting the **UFO**, I'll simply say it should have been! It's a charming story of David's past childhood, and the ups and downs of a family trying to make it, simply one day at a time, and that, despite struggles, David's childhood seemed still positive and remembered through rose-colored glasses. I think we've all here had childhoods similarly tinted, and this was an absolute enjoyable read!

WEIRD COMICS, meantime was a pleasant hodge-podge of short comics stories that David has been saving for just such an occasion when he was between projects (with a couple of STRAWMAN collections produced back in 2016) and—presumably—some time to kill before he started on something new of the same level.

WHAT I LIKED ABOUT WEIRD COMICS: David's work has been growing on me tremendously over the last few years, especially because of the aforementioned **STRAWMAN** comics since I joined the **UFO**. His art style is relaxed and very pleasing, although this book is not as "polished" as his previous collections it was great nonetheless. I especially loved HIPSTER BOT!

WHAT I DIDN'T LIKE ABOUT WEIRD COMICS: I must admit there is little about this quirky publication that I didn't like! So, I'd have to say I'm only disappointed that there probably won't be a second issue. David's attempt to "just make something and try to be interesting" really worked for me. What's next, David?

STRANGE FREQUENCIES

Opinions and Editorial
by David Branstetter

Straw Man News

So it's time for a new article for the UFO. I haven't touched my stack of indy comics in a few months so writing new reviews this late in the game is not a good idea. But there's a good reason for that. I've been working pretty steadily on Straw Man. I'm not even close to finishing issue 11 but I'm SOOOO much closer than what I was by this time last year. But I'll break it down.

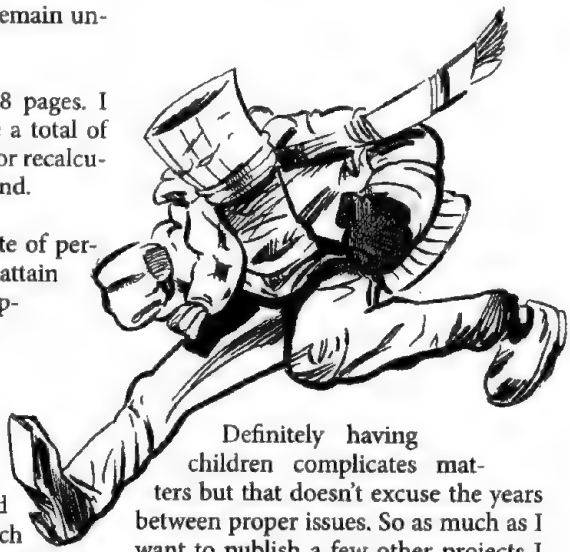
10 pages complete or near complete with a few minor modifications.

3 pages I would put in the significant amount done but not finished camp.

3 pages are penciled and 2 remain untouched.

So that would put me at 18 pages. I think there's supposed to be a total of 20 so I may need to recount or recalculate how I want the issue to end.

I realized that what ever state of perfection I was hoping to attain with this issue it will not happen. It may be a valiant effort and folks might be impressed with the final result but I had to give up on the fantasy of what it could be. I recently watch a documentary called "The New 8-Bit Heroes" which goes into detail the making of a homebrew Nintendo game. In the documentary the creator of the game had to come to the same realization. He had hit a wall and it was crippling his progress on the game. He sat on his work and his ideas for months unsure of where to go next. But he dug his heals in and started over from scratch and in the process invented a new tool to help him create the software faster and with more efficiency than before. I find the whole thing to be inspirational when people are able to achieve lifetime goals. I've put so much pressure on Straw Man 11 that it just wasn't something that I could live up to. So, now the idea is just to put in the work and see what I can do and try to improve as I go along. But I ain't painting the Sistine Chapel and this is no Mona Lisa.



Definitely having children complicates matters but that doesn't excuse the years between proper issues. So as much as I want to publish a few other projects I want to focus on getting this issue done as fast as possible. If you are wanting a

review of your book please let me know and I'll be sure to include it in my next article. Also if you need something from me to review please send me a message.

On that note it's sad to see that Richard Brooks has left the group. I really liked his Mr. Brooks comic and was looking forward to writing a review of his last two efforts.

Another thing that has recently caught my interest is Manga. I have resisted this genre for years erroneously thinking it was mostly fluff. I didn't grow up loving Dragonball Z or Pokemon. So I have no cultural belonging to this material. But I did read a few Pokemon books to my children and I've started reading Narutu for myself as it is readily available from the library. A volume might take 40 minutes of solid reading, so it's not too much of a commitment. The different perspective in layout and subject matter is quite refreshing. Getting used to reading the book backwards and from right to left can be a challenge but it's an easy obstacle overcome.

I also recently purchased vol. 2 of Neil Adams Batman for an incredibly low price at Ollie's outlet stores. They're currently liquidating DC's old trade paperback backlog. So many cool things to choose from but I had to show restraint for both time and budget reasons. It doesn't have to be said but those Neil Adams Batman issues are a work of art. I enjoyed almost every story and read the book in about 2 days over a few sittings. I've had difficulty actually getting into DC characters but this made me a believer in Batman.

I said all that kind of make the point that as my interest in comics begins to wain it's nice to know there's stuff out there that can make me excited about the genre again.
Overall I enjoy being in the UFO and I'm glad that Rob invited me to join almost 5 years ago. (Can't believe it's been that long!) The purpose has been to spur on fellow creators make more comics and I feel like I have failed the UFO and myself in that regard.

I had been attempting a career in graphic design by running my own business. I finally let that idea go in 2016 and have since relegated my design work to a side business. I obtained employment as designer for a t-shirt shop but I lost the job after a short 9 months. Meanwhile almost all my websites were wiped out due to a virus. For a while there things were not looking good. I was in a pretty bad funk. Thanks to some caring doctors and members of my church I was able to dust myself off and get back to work. Now I have a weekend job as a van driver while my wife works full time during the day. This seems to be a good configuration and has given me more time to work on the things I want to do.

Send you Questions or Comments to:
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TURBO-SLUSH POPS WERE FIRST SOLD IN 1964.
Turbo Slush POP
AS PART OF THE PROMOTIONAL LAUNCH- TURBO-SLUSH MAN HIMSELF APPEARED AT A LOCAL STORE!
CONSUM
HE WAS GIVING AWAY FREE TURBO-SLUSH POPS TO KIDS!
TBSM
I RAN DOWN AS FAST AS I COULD TO GET A FREE SWEETIE!
THANKS, TURBO-SLUSH MAN!
YOU'RE WELCOME, KIDS!
NICE!
HEY... LET'S DISGUISE OURSELVES, GO BACK AND TRY TO GET ANOTHER ONE!
OH... YEAH!
THANKS, TURBO-SLUSH MAN!
YOU'RE WELCOME, KIDS!
YES! IT WORKED!!
THE GUILT OF THESE ACTIVITIES HAS HAUNTED ME EVER SINCE.
DRAWN BY TOM LONG 2017

the negative zone

Sam Gafford, 700 Metacom Ave., Warren, RI 02885.
lordshazam@yahoo.com

So, here we are in 2018. Hard to believe. I can remember being a kid in 1970 when the year 2000 seemed a lifetime away. Lots of things have changed since them. Some good. Some not so good.

As many of you probably remember, I had announced that the new issue of FRANKENZINE #2 would be out in November. That clearly didn't happen. Partially for financial reasons but some personal reasons as well. If at all possible, I will get it out in January, 2018.

Much of 2017 was spent working on my writing career. I had some success in that area as I had no less than four books with my byline published last year. They were DREAMER IN FIRE AND OTHER STORIES (Hippocampus Press), THE HOUSE OF NODENS (Dark Regions Press), SOME NOTES ON A NONENTITY: THE LIFE OF H.P. LOVECRAFT (PS Publishing) and WHITECHAPEL (Ulthar Press). They've all gotten some nice reviews but haven't set the literary world on fire.

In 2018, I have a few other projects in mind. One of which is to do some more zine work. I've been away from it for too long but the actual format has yet to be determined. My primary project will be THE BONFIRE which is a graphic novel about the 1950's comic censorship craze. I'll probably be working on this for most of the year.

In addition to this, I hope to produce some single issues of various things bringing me back to producing my own comics again. Some of these will require getting new artists and I hope to be successful in this.

Although I have not been terribly active lately, I want everyone to know that I am receiving your zines and have been enjoying them very much. One of my resolutions for 2018 is to be more on top of deadlines and responding to people. My plan is to return to reviewing the memberzines with the next newsletter which I hope to be contributing to every issue in 2018.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Tales of the UFO

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THE IMAGINATION LINK #51: I enjoyed reading every page of this publication. When I first started reading Alan Sissom's "Changeling Seasons" the dialect of the narrator, a well-realized young girl, reminded me in a way of not only what one would associate with hillbilly talk, but the kind of speech that I heard as a youngster growing up in upstate New York in the 1960s. Of course, we were on the edge of being suburban, but quite rural still and I had a lot of farmer relatives, and I still recall, as a lad, my granny getting indoor plumbing. Yep, and sometimes my granny would say, "Hark!" when she wanted to have you shut up and listen to something. "Eyeah!" This story had a Huckleberry Finn feel to it, but it transcended what one expected, as Iris reveals more and more of her powers and her sisters' abilities and the references to her dear departed mama. This was well told and worthy of a Weird Tales story. I felt that not only was the atmosphere well described, but the action had me at the edge of my seat; there was a steady build up to the neighbor boy's abusive daddy ending up on the bridge and the sudden and engagingly told punishment he receives.

"The Link" was another competently told tale, again from a kids' point of view. Howie is entranced by his "buddy" but doesn't quite know his story, and neither does this round mechanical device. It's a probe for some alien-looking things. This is a nicely developed mystery in the science fiction genre.

So I started reading the article on collecting Doctor Who magazines by Rob Imes, thinking (with all due respect) that I am not a Dr. Who fan so I figured I would be loaded up with a lot of facts and trivia about the series, but no, it was about the methods of collecting! And I can relate to that, having done my share of Ebay purchases over the years. I learned some things about receiving something from overseas, third party mailing which drops the rates, for example. And I'm quite familiar with purchasing lots since I collect science fiction digests from the 50s and 60s (namely If and Galaxy). You end up with a certain amount of duplicates, and I sympathized with keeping the better copy of an issue too! There's the matter of collecting "everything" about an interest, is every fan publication, every issue worth it? That's a personal judgment too. The accompanying cover photos were all in the right place throughout the article and very helpful too, especially in the descriptions of certain issues containing a CD encased in cellophane around the original cover. The layout was enjoyable, however we get to a "jump" at the end to page 42 to just six lines, the continuation of a sentence, and here my decades as a typesetter/layout artist kicks in. In my obsessive nature I see a number of places where paragraphs could be kerned back, with just one or two words on the last line, and then on the top of page 22 there's a blatant "orphan" – "like eBay." Just a little bit of fudging here, pushing back and this article could have ended neatly at the bottom of page 25.

Then, since this is my only nitpick I wondered why Alan decided to jump half of his "Changeling Seasons" story to the back of the book as well. Maybe he wanted to push the comic story "The Broken Link" further to the front. Well, I've seen this kind of thing in science fiction digests too; a minor quibble in an otherwise excellent publication.

"Valley of the Yeti" by Roger Keel had a totally different feel from Alan's text story, and that's to be expected. Here the narrator Robert searches for answers in his father's disappearance in the mountains rumored to be populated by the mysterious abominable snowman. This

was well-realized and had a steady building of suspense throughout. OK, partway through I figured out where this was going! And I was right! It was telegraphed in a subtle fashion that got more solid as we went along and reached the climax in a satisfying manner. When I was teaching my comic book class I would show students issues of Creepy and Eerie from the 1960s and the stories in there – of the Mummy, Jack the Ripper, Frankenstein-like monsters – impressed them as "already done" and "old hat" but I told them, "Yes, even 50 years ago they were dated but I figure if you are going to tackle one of these well-known themes at least do it well!" That's the trick, and Roger has succeeded well in his effort! And to add to my interest I had recently finished reading a book on Big Foot, about the famous film reportedly taken of the creature in California. There's something mystifying about entertaining the idea of little-known creatures inhabiting the earth. And I've seen nature programs about elusive mountain gorillas so you never know ...

All in all Imagination Link was a great read and I'm glad Alan has decided to share it with me. Keep up the good work.

BURLAP #1 & 2: So let's see how I will approach my critique of this publication. First off, I see that the production values from the first issue to the second have improved. In the first issue you see pencil lines under the inked lines, not enough erasures. This can have something to do with the scanning, just a bit of contrast adjustment will fix that and the inside front page is grayed out, a mistake. The production standards in the second issue have improved quite a bit, with high contrast black and white line art. Crisp blacks and clear lines; definitely some quality here.

Now Gavin is a talented story teller. I think the structure of these tales is intricate and well handled, and the dialogue is good throughout. There's an ear to the way people actually speak and interact with each other. And he has no trouble getting his message across. If he applied his talents with a lucky break he could be a script writer for television and movies. There's good dramatic tension in all the scenes and a good transition between sequences as well.

Now for the content and intent of this comic, I feel disturbed and that may be the purpose of this artistic expression. In the first issue Tom Cork the protagonist not only takes down the terrorist but serves as judge, jury and executioner. And one could argue due process of law here, and then there's the aspect of people at war. It's clear where the sympathies lie. And the issue of carrying concealed weapons is a hot topic these days, allowing crossing of state lines, like the days of the Wild West. The pages detailing the pros and cons of comments on the internet are well done and very realistic as well. The very last page is a portent to the next episode and the hospital scene was well portrayed, again very realistic.

In the second issue the crippled cosplayer has her vengeance, playing vigilante to an extreme, to be honest like so many comic book heroes in the history of this story telling medium. It is without question where the author's sympathies lie, and to be generous this is an anti-Muslim stance, in my opinion a broad brush approach. And Gavin has exercised his first amendment rights. That's the freedom of self-publishing, and in a broader sense, that's what's happening in the social media realm as well. Is this a good thing?

I wonder how these stories will play out 20 or 30 years from now. Looking back to comics and films of the 1940s during WWII you will find plenty of pretty extreme depictions of the enemy. Look at the Human Torch or Captain America fighting off bestial-looking interpretations of Germans and Japanese soldiers. Of course these days all this seems dated and did this justify the internment of Japanese Americans during the war? Ask George Takei.

A few years ago I was at the Peabody-

Essex Museum in Salem MA, and saw an exhibit of Thomas Hart Benton's propaganda paintings from the WWII era. If you think the covers of Human Torch and Captain America were extreme, these paintings take those depictions to a whole new level. They may not be considered politically correct these days but they speak of a certain time.

There was a continued comic strip in the Sunday edition of the New York Times this year depicting a Muslim family's true experiences in America, being refugees from war-torn Syria, and some of the prejudice they experienced here. Here the comics medium is used to advantage in telling their story as much as Gavin has used his talents to express his views.

And considering his depiction of the Imam's tirades against the west, I would draw your attention to a recent event in Egypt where a Mosque was bombed by Isis and over 300 Muslims were killed. Consider also Las Vegas shooter in recent news who killed scores of people at a concert. He was not a Muslim, and neither was the Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh. My point is that there are bad people in all walks of life, and who can point the finger at one group with feeling a complete innocence in regard to the actions of your ancestors or associates?

I enjoyed Gavin's stories in his first publication The Propaganda Machine – challenging science fiction and horror works. Gavin is a very talented and accomplished writer, and certainly has passion for what he believes in. In my opinion his older works will stand the test of time much better than this effort. This of course is only my opinion.

TIME TRVLR #5-7: OK, I have to be honest, I have no idea what is going on here, but I have to hand it to Ian, he's doing a good job! His dialogue and relationships between the characters is well handled and realistic, for what such a weird effort. He seems to be addressing physics, and considering the heady lectures I've listened to on You Tube, I can almost get the gist of what is being spoken of. Time and dimensional worlds existing simultaneously is a good theme to pursue. And the exchange between creator and Herman is good too. There was some criticism in the letters column in #5 about Ian getting a more skilled cartoonist to illustrate his tales. I have to agree with Ian's (stubborn) attitude toward doing it himself. There's a certain amount of charm and earnestness about these comics that makes them appealing and let's look at page two of #6. That's some pretty well drawn perspective on that structure and its location. Drawing that staircase up that wall is no easy feat and it's well done. The cube looks like it sits on that plane as well. The use of gray scale coloring is working well too for all the panels. There's a sense of space and structure to it all that adds to its believability. You can tell Ian is having fun and that's what it's all about.

ODDS AND ENDS: I'm busy with all my local interests, teaching drawings to seniors at a local retirement community on a regular basis and having a lot of fun doing it. They are ambitious. I'm into accurate rendering and I have my students draw objects like toy horses, artificial flowers and dishes, and they copy calendar picture as well.

And my major interest is our local artist venture, The Switch Co-op, a storefront location of 29 artists' works. We're working on community partnerships and I'll be teaching a drawing course at my local arts center in collaboration with the co-op next month. And of course I'm always making art on my own, continuing with the Horseman series, and even doing an experimental comic book story using this character. Who knows? I may publish this comic when finished but I'm not sure when and I can't be "saddled" with a deadline. Long live the UFO! I'll stick around as long as I'm welcome. I can't guarantee any publishing schedule right now. Best wishes, everyone!

MASKS
by Gavin Callaghan

***TimeTrvlr* #8 & #9**

Ian Shires goes full-color with his latest two issues, and it looks great. His use of textures, shading, and computerized colors looks incredible, and enhances the artwork to a marked degree. (And Shires' new artwork also looks great.) A few months ago, I observed that his strip had the potential to create something truly epic and adventurous, like Carl Barks' *Scrooge McDuck* or Herge's *Tintin*, and Shires hasn't disappointed. His story is going exactly how I would have hoped- from Satan's castle in Hell, to an otherworldy alien city, half-buried in the sands of another dimension. And now Shires is talking about introducing a race of Giants into his strip! Great stuff.

In our store inventory, we have a very interesting (but also slightly annoying) archeological book by Charles Pellegrino, entitled *Return to Sodom and Gomorrah* (1994), which reminds me somewhat of the ruined city in Shires' story. Known by the Moslems in Iraq as *Mashkan-shapir*, the desert ruins are visible only for a few hours each day, when the morning dew renders its stones slightly darker against the surrounding sands. In ancient times, the city was a maze of courts and lawyers, and possessed an enormous temple dedicated to the underworld god Nergal, whom Pellegrino describes as a sinister, scythe-wielding deity akin to the Grim Reaper. The city seems to have been completely destroyed by fire in ancient times, and never re-inhabited- later forming the basis for the Biblical city of Sodom. (Pellegrino thinks it was destroyed by an accidental oil fire, from one of the numerous bitumen pits which still fill the area.) According to Pellegrino, the first Western archeologist to explore the site was suddenly confronted by a hissing cobra, as she attempted to pass through the ruined gateway into the city- hence this gate is now known as the Cobra Gate. (The demon god Nergal?, still protecting his city after all these millennia?)

-As an aside, I was very pleased to work with Ian, collaborating on a short 6-page strip for *TimeTrvlr*, featuring my *Stix & Stonez* characters. I figured they would make the best candidates for a cameo/crossover, since they "match" with his cartoony-looking characters (in a stylistic sense), and I can't wait to see how the finished strip turns out in color. I must say, it was quite a thrill to be involved with Shires' weird narrative, if only in a small way, and to collaborate with him on creating a strip, my first time doing so. I was hoping that being involved in plotting a story with him would give me some insight into his storylines and creative processes- and it did, in a strange way- although much of it is still as mystifying as before. Which is as it should be, I think.

Comics I Like

I like to explore the odd byways and dirt roads of the comics world. Comics which involve the same issues of vigilantism and masks that I also love. Some of my favorite comics and characters-

I recently came across an interesting issue of Marvel's *What If* #15, dedicated to the 1970s superhero, Nova (who basically a rip-off of DC's Green Lantern.) *What If* was an excellent comic, which allowed its creators to really cut loose, and explore ideas and themes not normally found in your standard Marvel comic.

In this short 8-page story, a young woman is granted the powers of Nova shortly after the murder of her husband by a mugger. Using her newfound powers, Helen Taylor basically attacks and kills off all of the criminals in New York City, in a vain attempt to get revenge.

One panel shows Nova fearlessly walking the city sidewalks in her costume, searching for criminals. She strides around in broad daylight, not worried about getting caught, despite the murders she has recently committed. She knows that no police -nor any other superheroes, for that matter- are powerful enough to apprehend her.

The best page in the story features Helen killing The Kingpin (it's about f&^%ing time), by throwing him out of his office window -followed by a great montage of her subsequent rampage throughout the city. Eventually, the government sends the Fantastic Four to take her down- after which she is transported into the Negative Zone for the protection of society. A satisfying and interesting tale- and the world would certainly be much better off without the Kingpin.

It's about f$%^&ing time; Nova kills off The Kingpin; from *What If* #15, © Marvel

Unfortunately, whether they admit it or not, Marvel ("The House of *Bad* Ideas") is now in the business of keeping its bad guys alive. If its heroes actually succeeded in killing off Dr. Doom, Red Skull, The Kingpin, Galactus, etc., then the comic biz itself would be over. John Byrne actually drew a comic during the 1980s, in which "super intelligent genius" Reed Richards argued, before an intergalactic tribunal, that it would be "wrong" to kill Galactus. By all means, keep the genocidal, planet-eating monster alive, Reed Richards. And be sure to feed it your own wife and child first.

All of this is clearly reflected in Marvel's current hiring practices: the former company of Leiber, Goodman, Simon, and Kurtzberg now going so far as to hire a Malaysian Moslem as artist on the *X-Men*. (Predictably, this Moslem later had to be fired -after it was revealed he had been sneaking pro-jihad messages into his artwork.) What would Captain America have thought of all this?

***The Imagination Link* #51 (Fall/Winter 2017)**

Was grateful to receive the latest issue of Alan Sissom's new *Imagination Link* anthology magazine. It includes a nice variety of comics, artwork, fiction, and non-fiction articles.

Rob Imes gives us an excellent article documenting his collecting of Britain's *Doctor Who* magazine. By coincidence- just one day before this issue arrived, I had been suddenly inspired to look up, on *Youtube*, an old *Doctor Who* serial I half-remembered from childhood. It featured all sorts of horrific and macabre imagery- WWI soldiers, gas masks, decaying skeletons, etc. In Peter Haining's book *The Key to Time*, I discovered it was entitled "The Deadly Assassin", and I can't wait to see it again someday.

I think most collectors share similar experiences with Rob. As a child, I never would have imagined that, as an adult, I would have accumulated nearly every issue of the original *Moon Knight* series from the 1980s. I only need four more issues!

I remember discovering copies of *Doctor Who Magazine* at *Comics for Collectors* in Ithaca, New York, as a child, and being so excited to see it. I didn't buy any issues- although I did purchase several issues of *Marvel Premiere*, featuring reprints of *Doctor Who* by Dave Gibbons, which I found in the quarter bins.

My friend Ben Lancki and I were the only kids I knew of, in our entire school district, who watched *Doctor Who* regularly on PBS channel 3, starting with 1975's "The Robot." My other friend, William Peterson, *would* have liked it, if he had seen it -but his parents wouldn't let him watch television, and didn't even own one.

I haven't been able to enjoy the "new" *Doctor Who* series, for several reasons. The Time Lords and Galifrey were always, symbolically, a representation of Britain and the British Empire- and ironically, this is also the reason why I dislike the new episodes so. Christopher Eccleston's Doctor is the perfect representation of everything I dislike about the new, socialist Britain. Uncouth, rude, angry (London is considered one of the rudest cities on Earth), Eccleston's Doctor is like a trans-dimensional version of songwriter Billy Bragg. One early episode featured Eccleston condemning an aristocratic woman to death- simply because he'd judged that she'd lived "long enough."

The OLD Doctors were many things- superior, arrogant, wise, funny, witty, endearing, charming- but they were never rude. This is *Doctor Who* reimagined as an opinionated soccer hooligan.

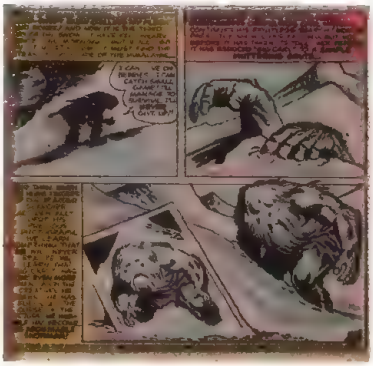
After I lost my PBS reception during the great digital switchover, (my TV lost the ability to

receive any channels below 16; if anyone knows why and can help me, please help!), I really wasn't sad not to be able to see the new *Doctor Who* any longer. Plus, one of the new Doctors physically resembles that daytime TV doctor, Doctor Oz! No thanks.

I liked unraveling the mystery of Sissom's "Changeling Seasons" weird horror story. I also liked his comic story, "The Link (Part 2)", and can't wait to see more of it- in fact, more comic strips in general by Sissom, whose art-style reminds me a bit of Larry Blake's. Some nice background work, too- you always knew where the characters were at all times. (I have the most difficult time drawing backgrounds; my figure drawings just seem to hover in a void.)

One thing- Sissom draws his panel borders very far apart. Does this look right to you guys? I always draw them very close together, and that looks "normal" to me. More content for the buck. What does everyone else think?

Strange but true fact- Roger Keel's weird fiction story, "Valley of the Yeti", reminds me of a Stan Lee/Jack Kirby six-pager I read long ago in Marvel's *Tomb of Darkness* #19 (1975), (reprinted from *Tales to Astonish* #13), entitled, "I Found the Abominable Snowman!" This story shares almost exactly the same premise and surprise pay off! I'm sure this is nothing more than the dangest coincidence.



Man goes out searching for a Yeti- only to discover he is searching for himself; by Lee & Kirby. © Marvel

Last year, after I created my superhero "Nobody", I was *just overjoyed* to go to my local comic shop, and find the latest issue of Dark Circle's *Black Hood* comic, where I read the coming attractions for next issue: featuring "The Nobody"! Please give me a break, God. And then I created "Deadboy"- and suddenly I found an old back issue of Neil Gaiman's *Deadboy Detective Agency*. I'll resist the urge to swear at the Almighty…..

I will say this- Keel's story does a far better job than Lee and Kirby's of setting up the eventual transformation from man into beast. In Marvel's version, the explorer (a criminal), simply transforms into the creature, due to his inherently violent and deviant nature. Keel's Yeti, however, is more of a lycanthropic creature, transmitted by biting.

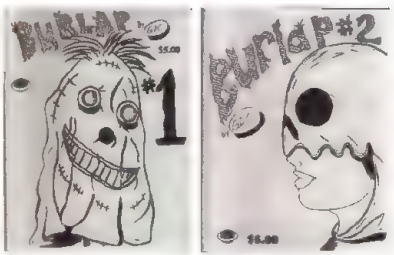
***Tetragrammaton Fragments* #247 (Oct. 2017)**

Another strong issue from Rob Imes and all the rest. It's so chuck full of stuff, there's not enough room for me to comment upon all of it.

Jason Bullock mentions Word Balloons. Steve Ditko has some interesting ideas about word balloons, as well. From what I understand, Ditko doesn't like them- he believes they intrude/interfere with the artwork. According to Ditko, a slight Tail in the corner of the panel should be enough to let any intelligent reader know which character is speaking. I've found this to be correct- although I also find Ditko's staccato method of scripting to be slightly unnatural. Ditko's characters talk in a sort of shorthand- especially when it comes to swear-words. This *does* keep the balloons from interfering with the artwork- although Ditko, in other strips, actually constructs images from the words and letters themselves! Ditko continues to experiment with the relationship between word and image.

***Burlap* #1 & #2 Still Available**

Issues #1 & #2 of my *Burlap* comic are still available, $5.00 each. Not available at your local comics stores, (or in your grocer's freezer) - only from me.



***Burlap* #1 & #2, still available.**

Burlap **Notes**

The idea behind ***Burlap*** was an exploration of Masks- those fabrics, cloths, or coverings which veil the face and the body from view. Not merely clothing, which is an essential human social convention, but something further: a *disguise,* which hides the face and thus transforms identity.

The fabric I chose could have been anything: cloth, velvet, leather, rubber. But Burlap seemed to fit best, for several reasons. First, because it is rough and harsh. There is a violent interface between it and the skin. It is, in many ways, an unpleasant, uncomfortable fabric. Itchy, rough, and hard- it hurts, even as it protects (just like the figure of the vigilante himself.)

Burlap is not pretty. It is crude- just as violence is crude. It smells, it gathers dirt, and it is frequently frayed at the edges. And it is ugly, just as violence is inherently and primally ugly.

Burlap is a poor-person's fabric. It was often worn by slaves, who had no other clothing. Religious penitents, too, used burlap, as a form of sacrifice and penance.

Also, burlap is often used for masks, at least in the case of the Scarecrow. (The Scarecrow, too, interests me greatly. Firstly, because it is an inanimate object, sewn in the shape of a man. -A human doll of sorts: but it is also used to instill fear. Fear in the shape of burlap.)

The transformation effected by burlap is seen most effectively in issue #1 of this series, in the panel where the killer/vigilante Tom Cork is shown side by side with his masked alter-ego, Mr. Jest. Compare their respective faces: Tom Cork is *frowning* (just as he frowned when he pulled the trigger and murdered the mall-shooter, earlier in the story), while the mask of Mr. Jest is *smiling.* One can easily imagine a similar look of anger on Tom Cork's hidden face, when he was vandalizing the mosques earlier in time- a look of anger hidden, and transformed, by Mr. Jest's false face.

TOM CORK FROWNING	MR. JEST SMILING

Tom Cork is a lot like his name. Cork (the substance) is lightweight, helpful, useful. Cork floats, it is porous and innocuous. Everyone loves a cork bulletin board. Cork's buoyancy can help save a drowning man- just as Tom Cork saves the shooting victims in the shopping mall.

But Cork is also dangerous. We've all heard of the man who "blows his cork." It denotes temper, slowly burning anger, and eventual explosion. Cork is innocuous- but can be harmful. It denotes unseen but building pressure, hidden but volatile. You can lose your eye from a champagne cork. Cork is someone who can, and will, snap.

Mr. Jest is the lie. He is the mask, which hides the inner anger. A mask is a membrane, an interface, which transforms, and projects, a veil of falsity and illusion. It contains, within itself, the contradiction of illusion vs. reality, lie vs. truth. Its fabric can both project and hint at the hidden reality underneath (the shape of a nose)- or it can change it completely (killer into clown.)

In *Burlap* #2, I delved further into this dichotomy between veil and reality. In this issue, we see two forms of illusion/deception: the discrepancy between what the radical Imam says to the Western news media in public, and what he says to his mosque congregation in private; and Sally Socket's fantasy about Skull Girl, versus the painful reality of her own existence. I then intercut the two forms of illusion vs. reality: the Imam's story, and Sally's story.

The illusory aspect, being the (masked) *outer* layer, is shown first. Just as a mask is the primary thing the public sees, so too is illusion is the first reality shown.

First column narrative ***-Illusion***	**Second column narrative** ***-Reality***
Imam lies to media	Undercover video of Imam
Skull Girl vs. Mosquemaster	Sally shoots crooked Imam

(All the things which the Imam says in the second column are statements from actual Islamic sermons [reworked slightly for grammar, etc.], taken from the books *The Arab Gulf and the West*, edited by B. R. Pridham, and *Hatred's Kingdom: How Saudi Arabia Supports the New Global Terrorism*, by Ambassador Dore Gold.)

I also tried to draw a connection between the false-identity which Sally adopts -*Skull Girl*- and the skulls which she saw in her nightmare about the mall-shooter, and the deaths of her two best friends. In a sense, Death has overlaid its false reality upon Sally's existence. So she adopts this visage of Death, like a mask. But it is not, inherently, her true reality.

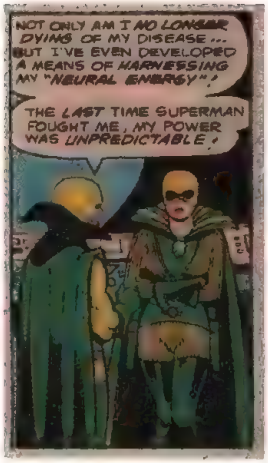
We see a similar process -albeit in reverse- with the Mosquemaster's face. After he is attacked by Sally and her anti-matter "Skull-Bolts", we see that his former human face has partially been burned away, like a mask- revealing the skull underneath; which, in Sally's mind, is his "true" identity. He pretends to be human, but in reality, he is a figure of Death, sowing death and destruction. Sally adopts this skull-identity as a temporary expedient, only after he steals her voice; but the skull represents who the Imam truly is, his real identity, which had been hidden by his face.

In the 3-panel sequence at the bottom of page fourteen, we see the transition between fantasy and reality, at the exact point in the story in which Sally finally dons her lopsided, homemade Skull Girl mask and shoots The Towelhead (actually a mosque-worker named Abdul.) She can only speak in this panel, because it is fantasy (in reality, she has been rendered mute due to brain-damage sustained in the recent terrorist attack.) The background of the panel, however, shifts from black to white- from the darkness of the Mosquemaster's underground cemetery lair, to the brightly-lit back office of the mosque. There, her gun is now her voice: the voice of one responding to violence, with violence. Temporarily, Sally dresses herself in the terrorists' own guise- that of the bringer of death. She becomes like the terrorists- a bringer of death. But that is only an illusion, fabric-deep.

Black background	Half black/half white background	White background

Sally's hood, in the center panel, is meant to resemble a smiling skull when shadowed- her head recessed within the hood, *a la* DC's Golden Age Hourman, or Marvel's later Moon Knight.

I was also partly-inspired by the female sidekick to the DC *Superman* villain, the Atomic Skull, who also wore a half-mask that hid the upper part of her face, but exposed her lower jaw. (Named Felicia, she was an evolved black panther whom the Atomic Skull adopted as his girlfriend. [See *DC Comics Presents* #35.])


NOT ONLY AM I NO LONGER DYING OF MY DISEASE... BUT I'VE EVEN DEVELOPED A MEANS OF HARNESSING MY "NEURAL ENERGY"!
THE LAST TIME SUPERMAN FOUGHT ME, MY POWER WAS UNPREDICTABLE!

The partial inspiration for Skull-Girl; Felicia from *DC Comics Presents* #35, © DC

Skull Girl's thought balloon in the central panel, "Death to Islam", forms (in my opinion) a just riposte to the constant Moslem refrain of "*Death to America*", heard all over the world. When Moslems repeatedly chant "Death to America" (have any of them actually ever MET an American?), that means nothing less than: death to my friends, to my family, to my loved ones, and (most importantly) to me.

I had originally intended to include a publisher's indicia at the bottom of page one of *Burlap*, just like any other "real" comic. This short paragraph would have included my name, contact info., copyright information, and all the other things printed by "professional" comic book publishers.

But then I asked myself: why? Why should I ape *them*? Who am I trying to impress? I am not, nor do I want to be, them. All including a copyright indicia in my comic would do, is imitate the actions of larger publishers- publishers whom I dislike intensely. So why would I want to imitate them, anyway?

Like it or not, creating comics is a solitary venture. Sure, Marvel and DC had a bullpen to make corrections, and a letterer to letter things, and an editor to catch misspellings, or tell you yes or no- but I'm not Marvel or DC. I'm just a guy by myself. Cartooning is, even more than writing, (and certainly more than film/cinema), a solitary activity. Kirby himself was like a one-man film factory. He didn't NEED that editorial or publishing apparatus, intervening between

himself, and his readership.

By excluding anything irrelevant to the art and story, I think I've achieved a sort of integrity in the final product, however weak my actual story or art. It's *just the comic*. It's *all about the comic*, and nothing else. (Did Picasso put copyright information on each of his paintings?) There's just the name/signature, and nothing else (except for the required UFO information.)

Another area where *Burlap* differs from your "regular" comic: no captions.

Partially, it's response to the current trend for using captions in lieu of *thought balloons*. (When did thought balloons vanish?) I know people think using *captions* instead of *thought balloons* makes comics seem more profound, literate, adult, etc. But I think the caption craze is just ridiculous.

It may have been the great Larry Hama who was the first to eradicate thought balloons, in *G. I. Joe*. I actually have no quarrel with that. He was making, I think, an aesthetic and intellectual decision. You would only be able to *see and hear* what the characters were doing, and thus characterization and outward actions became the key to unlocking a character's motives and reasoning. This, I think, was brilliant.

But then Alan Moore and Frank Miller came along, with their dark, dreary, dower captions, full of harsh, gloomy, portentous (and pretentious) thoughts. As if somehow, somewhere, the characters themselves were sitting and narrating what was happening - perhaps, like William Holden in *Sunset Boulevard*, from beyond the grave.

Captions allow the author of the comic to pretend to be clever and all-knowing and profound, while at the same time introducing an extraneous narrator into the script: a false, disembodied, all-knowing figure who pretends to be there, somehow witnessing these events, when he really isn't.

Just like any other lying fiction-author, the caption-narrator tells us what (isn't) really happening, and supplies the readers with what he thinks we *need* to feel/know/think/believe. The caption thus performs a service which the art, direction, viewpoint, and figure-drawing all apparently fail to do. The caption supplements and props up what the artist and dialogue writer fail to show/convey on their own.

Ultimately, no thought balloons simply means: NO THOUGHT.

In further issues of *Burlap*, I intend to explore the borderland which I see between comics, cosplay, and vigilantism. I hope to achieve an Ensor-like atmosphere, involving a variety of masks, skulls, and other disguises, such as that seen during Halloween, Carnival, and other celebrations on the borderland between this world and another.

"The Baghead", which follows, is four-pager which is sort of the first *Burlap* story. It was written and drawn first; plus, its title character possesses a head made from an old burlap sack - which is where the title (*Burlap*) essentially comes from.

I had always intended to do some period-piece *Burlap* stories, set either in the 1800s or 1920s, dealing with early American vigilantism, the KKK, lynch mobs and such things; and "The Baghead" is sort of related to that- albeit a little less realistic than my other *Burlap* stories, which are set firmly in the real world, rather than fantasy. We might think of "The Baghead" as Burlap #0- if we believed in #0 numbering (which we *don't*.)

Mystery Solved

I finally solved the mystery of my missing windshield wiper -which vanished several months ago in June, after being hit by an enormous hailstone while driving.

I recently lifted up my hood to clean out the autumn leaves that had fallen into the air filters of my car, and found the missing wiper on top of the filters, where it's evidently been lying for several months, undisturbed.

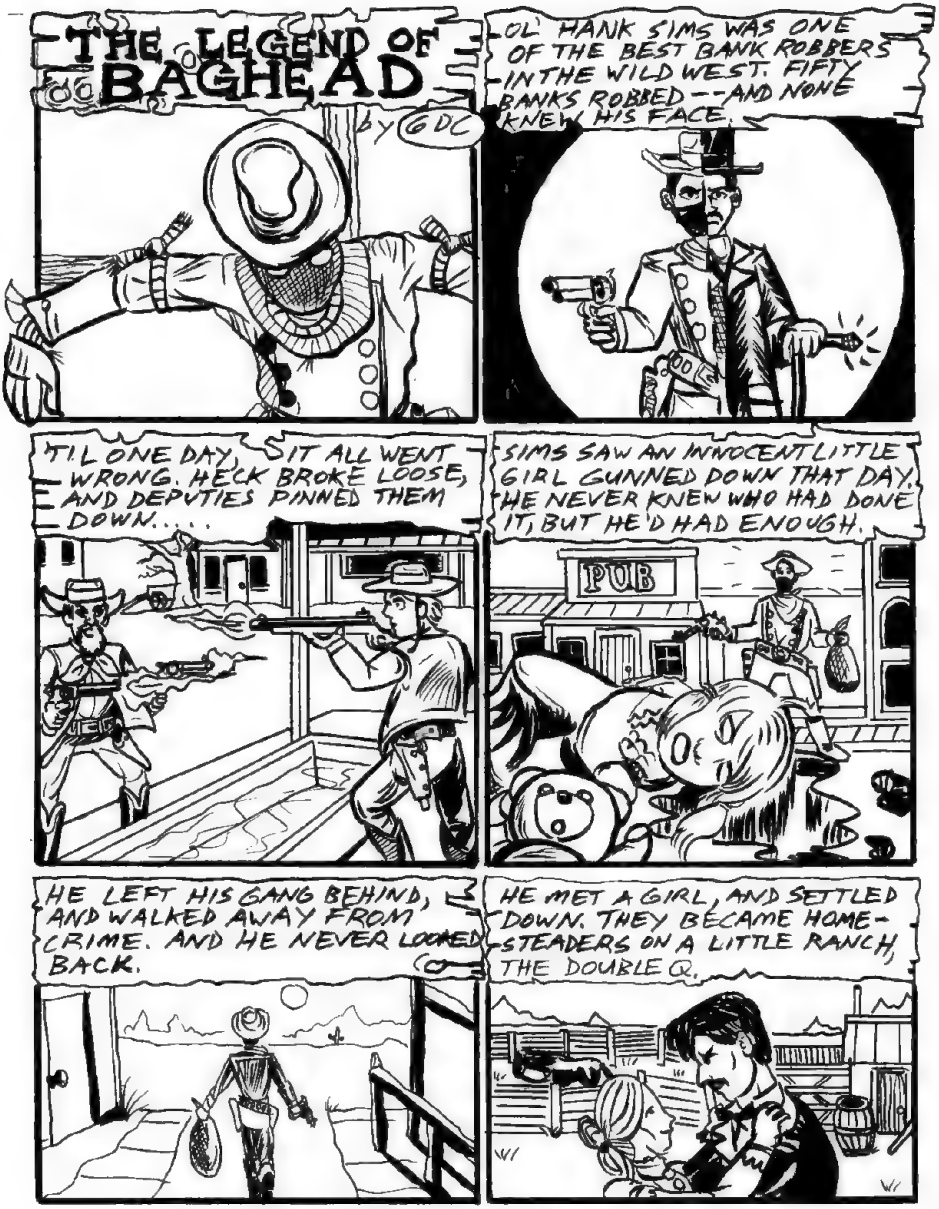
Although unusable (its plastic attachment was smashed to bits), it's slightly reassuring to know that it didn't simply migrate into another dimension, or disintegrate into nothingness, as I had previously surmised.

Women Smarch
by GDC

Stone brides that Don Juan left unkilled
Their yearning graves as yet unfilled
Rise red like ghosts from wars unfought
Then glide across the parking lot.

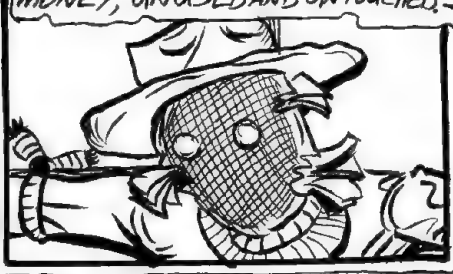
In Furies' stead they form a host
Though dead they've never seen a ghost
Hover across the battle's glare
Perfumed and doomed without a care.

Jack the Ripper stole their eyes
Tore the clothes from their disguise
Ripped their bodies from their bones
-Their selves were for his eyes alone.

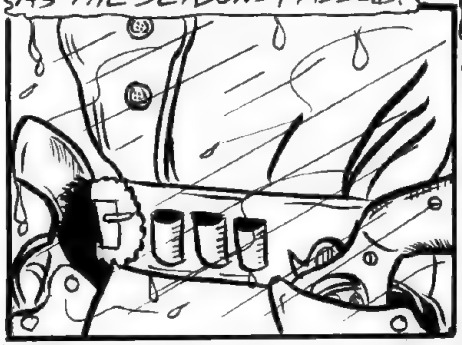

THE LEGEND OF BAGHEAD
by GDC
OL' HANK SIMS WAS ONE OF THE BEST BANK ROBBERS IN THE WILD WEST. FIFTY BANKS ROBBED -- AND NONE KNEW HIS FACE.
TIL ONE DAY, IT ALL WENT WRONG. HECK BROKE LOOSE, AND DEPUTIES PINNED THEM DOWN.....
SIMS SAW AN INNOCENT LITTLE GIRL GUNNED DOWN THAT DAY. HE NEVER KNEW WHO HAD DONE IT, BUT HE'D HAD ENOUGH.
POB
HE LEFT HIS GANG BEHIND, AND WALKED AWAY FROM CRIME. AND HE NEVER LOOKED BACK.
HE MET A GIRL, AND SETTLED DOWN. THEY BECAME HOMESTEADERS ON A LITTLE RANCH, THE DOUBLE Q.

IN THE CENTER OF SIMS' FIELDS, STOOD A SCARECROW. HE DRESSED HIM IN HIS OLD ROBBER CLOTHES, THEREBY HANGING HIS OLD SELF IN EFFIGY.

ITS HEAD WAS MADE FROM THE BAG OF STOLEN LOOT FROM SIMS' FINAL ROBBERY, ITS EMPTY BRAIN FILLED WITH MONEY, UNUSED AND UNTOUCHED.



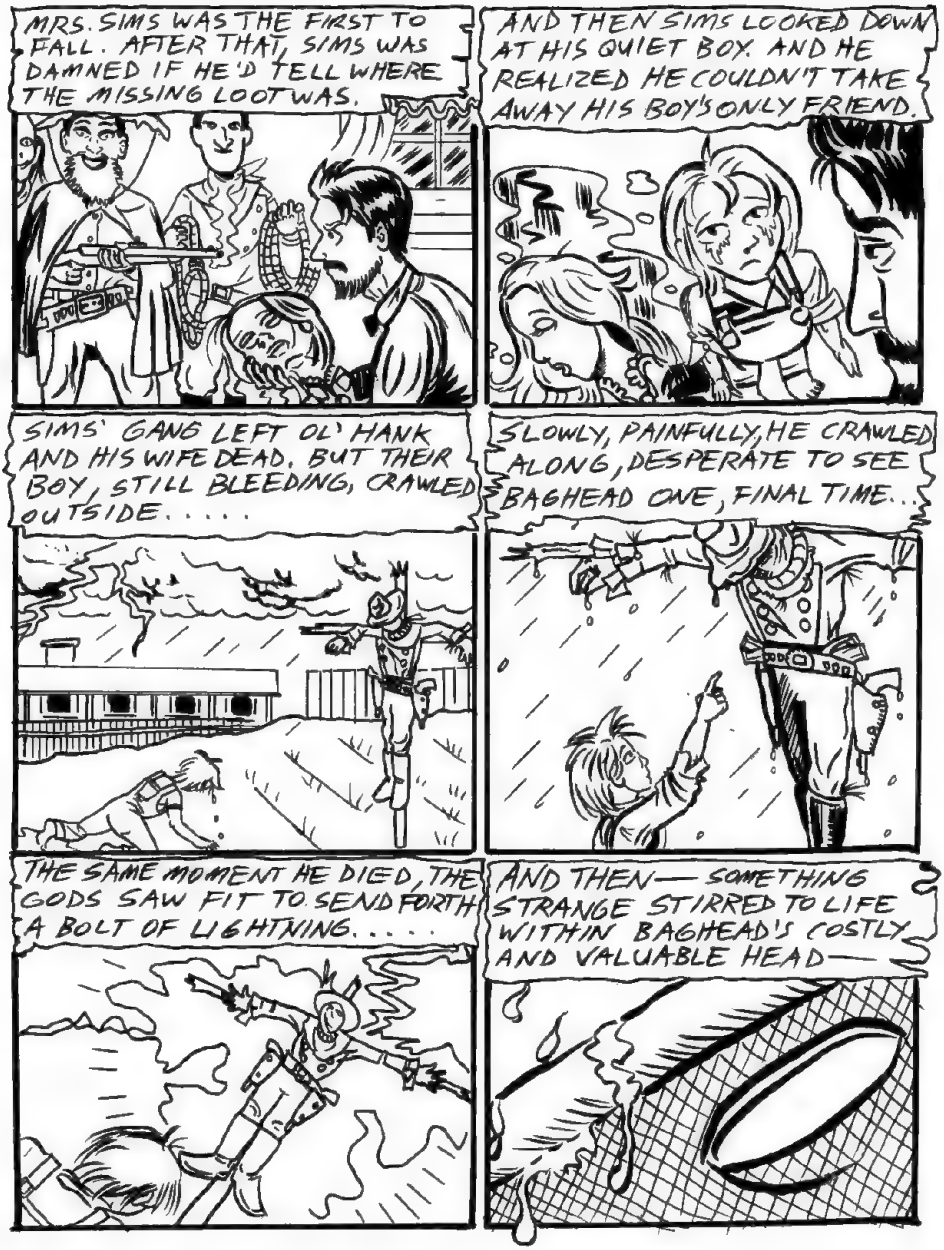
IN THE SCARECROW'S HOLSTERS, OL' SIMS' TWO GUNS STILL HUNG.... SLOWLY RUSTING AS THE SEASONS PASSED.



OL' SIMS' BOY WAS SIMPLE MINDED, AND SELDOM SPOKE. BUT HE LOVED TO SIT ALL DAY IN THE FIELD, WITH HIS BEST FRIEND.

"BAGHEAD", HE CALLED HIS FRIEND. HE WOULD SIT AT HIS FEET, STARING ABSENTLY INTO SPACE.

UNTIL ONE DAY—FINALLY—THE BAD MEN FROM SIMS' OLD GANG CAME, LOOKING FOR THEIR STOLEN LOOT.


MRS. SIMS WAS THE FIRST TO FALL. AFTER THAT, SIMS WAS DAMNED IF HE'D TELL WHERE THE MISSING LOOT WAS.
AND THEN SIMS LOOKED DOWN AT HIS QUIET BOY. AND HE REALIZED HE COULDN'T TAKE AWAY HIS BOY'S ONLY FRIEND.
SIMS' GANG LEFT OL' HANK AND HIS WIFE DEAD. BUT THEIR BOY, STILL BLEEDING, CRAWLED OUTSIDE.....
SLOWLY, PAINFULLY, HE CRAWLED ALONG, DESPERATE TO SEE BAGHEAD ONE, FINAL TIME..
THE SAME MOMENT HE DIED, THE GODS SAW FIT TO SEND FORTH A BOLT OF LIGHTNING.....
AND THEN— SOMETHING STRANGE STIRRED TO LIFE WITHIN BAGHEAD'S COSTLY AND VALUABLE HEAD—

BAGHEAD KILLED SIMS' OLD GANG THAT NIGHT. EVEN THE OLD AND RUSTED GUNS SOME-HOW LEARNED TO FIRE---
U.S. NATIONAL BANK
AND NOW, HE PROWLS THE WEST, HALF-EVIL, LIKE THE CLOTHES HE WEARS; THE OTHER HALF GOOD, LIKE THE MUTE BOY, WHOSE SOUL NOW WEARS THE CLOTHES...
THE BAGHEAD
END

View from the Edge by Roger Keel

Well, been quite a while since I did this column. For that I am sorry.

As I sit here today, January 6, 2018, with a head cold and a ring in my left ear, I thought I would look back at this past year and give everyone a look at what I have planned for this year.

I actually got two books out last year, "Adventures of Jack Banyon #2" and "The All-New Super-Mystery Comics V. 9#1". The latter is one that I am most proud off as it took over 4 years from initial conception to final release. A joint effort with some super talented people – Scott Shriver, Rock Baker, Jeff Austin, Paulo Gomes, Tony Lorenz, John Lambert, Lance Pigeon, Mindy Lopkin, and Robert Sodaro – this was my first foray into writing super heroes. The final book was a homage to the Golden Age of comics and I think we did a great job.

While I didn't do as much writing this past year as I have in the past, I did start doing some work with a new comic company – InDELLible Comics (a company that is using PD Dell characters) and of course some prose work for both Collector's Club Newsletter and Imagination Link.

I have a lot on the slate for 2018. I have Jack Banyon #3 nearly ready for printing, just waiting on the cover. This will be my UFO book (yes I know a year behind). Jack #4 should be out near years end too. I have the sequel to "Princess of the Trees" written and in the hands of a new artist. The sequel to O. T. Ferret is in the works as well, but that may be a book for 2019. I am, also, working on a number of prose stories for various magazines, and of course my novel.

As a writer, I have to be dependent on others for the art for a comic and that leaves me with not getting a book out on time for the UFO. But, I think I will try something new this year. I may try either doing my own mini comic (art and all) or publish short prose filled books that will meet with UFO guidelines. My attempts so far at art doesn't quite equal the quality of Cynical-man, so that is something I'm working on. My prose idea seems to be the most logical one for me right now. I am, also, considering packaging my Detective Harry S. Truman stories in a collection. These stories have been featured in both CCN and Imagination Link. Any thoughts on this?

Some of the books I have received over the year from members. If I have left anyone out, I'll get to you next column.

Imagination Link #51 – Alan Sissom.

Alan's prose oriented 'zine is always a treat, even with my minor contributions (I would say in spite of such). This issue is no different. Alan's lead story – "Changeling Season" is one of the better stories I have read this year. As a writer you have to try to put yourself in the shoes of your characters, it is hard when that character is of the opposite sex. At least, I have found it hard to do a story with a female lead. Alan has captured the female view perfectly in this story and the fact that it is a cracker jack fantasy story is a plus.

Alan has told me often that his art is not that good, but I like it and the story in this issue is very good.

Rob Imes' Dr. Who magazine appreciation article was enjoyable as well. I own a few of these magazines and try to get at least a couple every year.

Timetrvlr - Ian Shires

I'm not going to comment on every issue that Ian has sent (just got the latest color ones), as he is very prolific. These are fun!! Took me a while to get into the story, but now I look forward to every issue. The simple art works and the story is involving. On the first page of the current issue #8, Ian mentions a possible return of Dungar. I remember this series from days gone by, I even think I have a couple of copies somewhere. Hope you get and artist and bring him back.

The Winter of '89 - David Branstetter.

I really enjoyed this. Slice of life comics, especially autobiographical make for interesting reads. Combine a moving story with David's expressive art and you get something wonderful. David's solid storytelling which I enjoyed in Strawman, seems to have improved with this story. I look forward to more such work from him.

Burlap #1 and #2 - Gavin Callaghan

I really don't know where to begin with these books. While I like Gavin's art and storytelling, I'm rather dismayed at his subject matter. Not the violence itself, but the narrow view of the world that he presents. Perhaps it is because I am a "bleeding heart liberal" (whatever the hell that means) and don't judge every group by the insane actions of a few I have very little fear of Muslims, African-Americans, Latinos, Asians, Bikers or any other of the many groups that have been stereotyped over the years. To generalize your world outlook on fear and falsehoods is wrong, as wrong now as it was in the 1940's when Japanese-Americans were put in camps just because they were Japanese, or back in the 1800's when the saying was "Only good Indian is a dead Indian", or in the era of the Jim Crow laws when all African-Americans were considered sub-human, lazy animals by a lot of people. And before any one says I'm picking on just the USA with this, we Canadians have been guilty of these offences as well. Discrimination, fear and hate based on stereotypes have been happening since the dawn of history and sadly it will continue to occur, such is the nature of humans. We fear and hate that which we do not understand, we group the extreme few with the base majority, we let our fears and misunderstandings over rule our logic and understanding.

Are there Muslim/Islamic terrorist? Yes, there are. But one should not judge all Muslims by the actions of these assholes. Just as one should not judge all Irish by the actions of the IRA, or all bikers by the actions of the Hell's Angels or every White Christian Man by the actions of someone like Dylann Roof or Anders Breivik.

Sorry to have gone on a bit of a political rant, but as someone who has friends (both Facebook and personal) of every race, religion, and sexual orientation, I find it a bit troublesome when extreme stereotypes are used to judge them (my friends) when people first meet them.

Till next time.

Roger

COLUMN #4: HAPPY NEW YEAR! I APPRECIATE ALL THE KIND WORDS REGARDING "SHE'D NEVER DANCE WITH AN USHER." I WANTED TO GET ANOTHER ZOOK AND MAX CALLED "SURGICAL MYSTERY TOUR" DONE IN DECEMBER BUT THE "BAGGA PRESENTS" JAM WITH JOE MEYER HAPPENED INSTEAD. PLUS, I'VE GOT THE FIRST OF TWO TEAM-UP SCRIPTS FROM IAN SHIRES, SO THERE'S PLENTY ON THE HORIZON (AND MY VERIZON BILL). AND SPEAKING (I MEAN WRITING) OF IAN, I'VE GOT TIMETRVLR #7-10 TO REVIEW. AGAIN, IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS I LOVE ("IGNORE WHITE SPACE"). THE TIME FIELDS REMIND ME OF BILL & TED, AND YES, THE EVIL DOUBLE SAYING "I HATE YOU!" STILL MAKES ME LAUGH. AS FAR AS SOCIAL MEDIA TO BLAME FOR THE STATE OF SMALL PRESS, I AGREE BECAUSE I SPEND WAY TOO MUCH TIME ON IT (BUT THEN AGAIN, THAT'S MY FAULT). ANYWAY, I ENJOY HOW IAN'S CHARACTERS INTERACT WITH HIM, AND THE FULL-COLOR LOOKS GREAT... BUT, WAIT! HAVE I BEEN CALLING SATAN "EVIL DOUBLE" BY MISTAKE? AND IS IT GRTUK OR GRUTUK? EITHER WAY, I WANT A CUSTOM ACTION FIGURE (YOU SHOULD SEE THE THINGS THEY COME UP WITH AT TOY TOKYO IN NYC). THE COVERS GET BETTER AND BETTER, TOO (LOVE #9 AND 10). GAVIN'S BURLAP #1 IS A POWERFUL COMMENTARY ON HOW WE CHOOSE SIDES. I LIKE THE ART, BUT WOULD RECOMMEND ERASING THE PENCILS. I KNOW, I'VE RELEASED SEVERAL COMICS WHERE THE BLUE LINES SHOW UP... I ALWAYS THOUGHT THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO BE INVISIBLE WHEN YOU PHOTOCOPY THEM! WHEN I STARTED READING #2, I THOUGHT "MAN, SALLY CAN'T CATCH A BREAK!" UNTIL I REALIZED IT'S THE SAME STORY FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE. OR IS IT A DIFFERENT ANGLE? I'D LIKE TO SEE THIS SERIES IN COLOR, TOO (AND MINE! MAYBE SOMEDAY)! I'M GOING TO SAVE ALAN'S IMAGINATION LINK FOR NEXT TIME, SO I CAN GIVE IT A PROPER REVIEW. AND I'M LOOKING FOR SOMETHING IN THE VAULT TO SEND HIM, WHICH SOME OF YOU GOT YEARS AGO (AND I REALLY SHOULD MAKE MORE COPIES). ☮

SOUNDTRACK: GROUPER'S ALIEN OBSERVER & MIRRORRING'S FOREIGN BODY

Tim

NOZ NOTES

by Rob Imes

It's been a while since I've reviewed the UFO memberzines that have arrived in my mail, so here's my opinion of some recent arrivals.

BAGGA PRESENTS (Tim Kelly & Joe Meyer)

This was a short but sweet mini. I assume that Tim & Joe drew their respective selves. Unless one drew one page and the other drew the other page? It's hard to tell, so I'd say that means their work is a good match. As a Beatles fan who owns a few bootleg releases, I enjoyed reading the tiny printed titles of the records on the last page.

TIME TRVLR #1-10 (Ian Shires)

It's hard for me to comment on this series because I can barely keep track of what is going on due to all the pseudo-scientific jargon being discussed by the characters (which is mostly what occurs in these ten issues). I went back to #1-4 (which I'd read earlier) before tackling #5-10, thinking that might help, but they were still a bit of a chore to read with little reward for this reader. Having said that, I think that there is improvement in the strip. The addition of the gray tones in #4-7 made the art more appealing to look at, as did the addition of color beginning with #8.

Ian's artwork looks a lot better in long shots (like the covers of #5, 9-10) than in the continual straight-on face panels which get monotonous after awhile. Those relentlessly reoccuring face shots remind me of former UFO member Brien Wayne Powell's *Magnet Man* strip. They work in Brian's strip because there's a payoff/joke at the end of every page and it's all done with humor; the repeating faces is part of the comedy. With Ian's strip, it just looks like an info-dump, and I dreaded turning the page to find more panels of endless talking heads. The panels showing characters *doing something* look a lot better, even beautiful in a weird way. I think Ian may not even realize the power of his drawings of characters in action or the landscapes around them. That is an avenue that I wish he'd explore more. I'd like to see his art given more free reign, and see less focus on backstory and plot explanations. Let the comic unfold like a flower or a poem and less like a wordy textbook. I will say that I enjoyed the backup strip a little more than the lead because there was more of a human element in it, with Smiley seeing his father. Finally something that we mere humans can relate to in this strip!

IMAGINATION LINK #51 (A. Sissom)

Unfortunately I haven't done more than read the 7-page comic in this issue (and my own article of course) because I just couldn't get into reading the two prose short stories (sorry Alan and Roger)! I have to be in the right frame of mind to read prose, and usually when I pick up a zine like this I'm keen to read a comic, view artwork, or skim articles and/or letters. I will hopefully get around to reading the stories soon, though! As for "The Link" strip, I thought it was a little dull. It suffers from the same problem that Ian's comic does for me -- too much talking about things that I can't relate to (alien beings, etc.). Still, I love the anthology format, and there's always the hope that next issue will be up my alley.

THE NOBODYS #1 (Gavin Callaghan)

This arrived in early February, just as this issue of *T-Frags* was going to press. Last issue I criticized the anti-Muslim sentiment in Gavin Callaghan's comics and columns. While I think that sentiment exhibits an unfair anti-religious prejudice, I think that Gavin expresses his beliefs in a lively and satirical fashion in his comics that make them enjoyable to read. The artwork is crude but impressive in its directness. On a technical level, *The Nobodys* is Gavin's best work yet, with the addition of coloring.

I've read crudely-drawn, amateurish comics before, ones that reflect a mainstream sensibility (such as the inclusion of superheroes and fight scenes), but Gavin's work reads like an alternative cartoonist who is having fun using the tropes of the mainstream to share a decidely non-mainstream message. Not even a "message" really, but an *attitude* -- one that derides the mainstream (the press, comics) as blinded by a knee-jerk "tolerance" to the point of self-destruction. I disagree with Gavin's bias against Muslims, but I find his comics (both this new series and *Burlap*) to be highly entertaining. He is doing work that is by necessity small-press, because few if any publishers would touch it due to its content. Hopefully there will be more issues like this one in the future.

The UFO CHECKLIST

The United Fanzine Organization (UFO) is a co-op of small-press comics publishers and creators dedicated to setting a higher standard of quality in independent and alternative press. The members mutually aid each other in the promotion and production of their own publications. Any small-press publisher interested in applying for membership in the UFO should contact the UFO Chairman: **Rob Imes, 13510 Cambridge #307, Southgate, MI 48195** or you can email him at ***robimes@yahoo.com*** The official UFO website: ***http://unitedfanzineorganization.weebly.com***

TETRAGRAMMATON FRAGMENTS!! #248: This is the UFO Newsletter, the central forum for UFO members, containing columns and artwork that can't be found anywhere else. 32 digest-size B&W pages for **$3.00** postpaid in the USA from **Rob Imes, 13510 Cambridge #307, Southgate, MI 48195** or you can email him at ***robimes@yahoo.com*** for more info.

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